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**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees:
questions relating to refugees and displaced persons and
humanitarian questions**

**Letter dated 4 December 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of
Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation,
Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General**

We should like to refer to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States.

In 1998, the Conference's Steering Group once again reviewed progress made in implementing the provisions of this important document, which made it possible to begin a constructive dialogue on the entire range of the problems of forced and illegal migration in the region. Our countries are firmly determined to bring about, consistently both through our own efforts and with the assistance of donor States, the implementation of the recommendations of the Programme of Action.

We note with satisfaction that all the participants in this process express a political commitment to the obligations arising under the Programme of Action. This was once again confirmed both in the special decision on the Conference's follow-up measures adopted in October 1998 by the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as well as during the process of reaching agreement on the draft resolution on this question at the current session of the General Assembly (A/C.3/53/L.52).

The success of the follow-up measures depends to a considerable extent on adherence to the principle of the complementarity of national and international efforts agreed upon in the Programme of Action. At the same time, international support for the implementation of the Programme of Action is not only not on the increase, but is tending to diminish. The Programme's priorities, in our estimation, are increasingly being accorded peripheral attention by the international community. We believe that the Programme's implementation is closely linked with guaranteeing stability and security in our countries, maintaining social harmony and staying the course aimed at bringing about democratic reforms. These goals



are fully in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose fiftieth anniversary we are solemnly commemorating in our countries.

Today as never before, we are in need of a demonstration of international solidarity, practical results and a high degree of political responsibility on the part of all our partners in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Aware of the objective difficulties that have recently arisen in finding means to meet humanitarian needs on a worldwide scale, we nevertheless should like you to use your influence and authority to encourage an appropriate response on the part of the international community to our countries' expectations in this area. We should like to count on continued international support by the countries that initiated the process of the Conference and made a significant contribution to it. Our countries' peoples and Governments express their sincere appreciation and gratitude for this assistance.

We are looking forward to the further expansion of international cooperation in this important humanitarian field and, for our part, we shall continue to take the greatest possible national measures in order to implement the Programme of Action.

We should be grateful if this letter were circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 105.

(Signed) M. **Abelian**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations

(Signed) A. **Sychou**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Belarus to the United Nations

(Signed) P. **Chkheidze**
Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations

(Signed) Z. **Eshmambetova**
Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations

(Signed) S. **Lavrov**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

(Signed) R. **Alimov**
Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations

(Signed) A. **Ataeva**
Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations